

# OPEN EYE GALLERY

Open Eye Gallery  
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## SARAH FISHER TO LEAD OPEN EYE GALLERY, LIVERPOOL

The Board of Trustees of Open Eye Gallery is delighted to announce the appointment of a new Executive Director, Sarah Fisher, who will join Liverpool's internationally recognised photography gallery from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015.

Sarah has over 25 years experience in the arts. Currently working as a consultant with the Arts Council on the strategic development of partnerships with universities across the North, she is also Chair of FACT, Liverpool, and Axisweb, Leeds.

Her recent history includes leading the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art, Manchester, where she worked with partners to exhibit Chinese artists in 7 UK cities, including the largest exhibition of Chinese contemporary art in the UK to date, *Harmonious Society*, delivered across 6 venues in Manchester with audiences of over 250,000.

Through her consultancy work with arts organisations Sarah specialised in supporting small artist-centred organisations to grow their businesses and resilience, including organisations that experienced the first wave of public funding cuts, such as Castlefield Gallery, but have gone on to be some of the most entrepreneurial and successful small arts providers nationally.

As Head of Visual Arts for Arts Council England North West between 2005-2010, Sarah directed the overall strategic planning process in respect of ACE North West's £5m annual investment in the visual arts. Sarah held Executive lead for two Corporate Plan Priority areas in 2008-11 and her achievements included establishing an infrastructure to develop a contemporary arts market; instigating sector/multi-agency advisory panels for visual arts universities; and regional and national programmes supporting digital development including a 1.2 million national pilot programme *AmbITion*, which was later taken up by the Scottish Arts Council as *AmbITion Scotland*.

Sarah began her career as a London-based practicing artist, undertaking international residencies and lecturing at the Slade School of Art and Chelsea College of Art and Design. Sarah has a B.A. Fine Art (Winchester School of Art) M.A. Fine Art (Royal College of Art).

Of her new role Sarah says:

“After supporting the creative ecology in the UK to adapt to leaner times, whilst maintaining its ambition as a world cultural leader, I am delighted and honoured to be given the opportunity to lead Open Eye Gallery - one of the most respected photography galleries in Europe.

I am equally proud to be joining the visual arts sector in Liverpool, a city which has for decades punched above its weight, providing an exceptional world class programme, the best in the UK outside of London.”

Sarah succeeds Lorenzo Fusi, who leaves the gallery to undertake new international projects. He leaves having achieved a substantial increase in visitor numbers, and digital audiences. Under his tenure, Open Eye Gallery welcomed 56,517 people over the last financial year, the highest figure to date since the gallery's move to Mann Island, an increase of over 500% when compared to the gallery's time in the Ropewalks area. Lorenzo curated, amongst other projects, the most visited exhibitions in the history of the gallery (Open Eye Gallery's contributions to the 2012 and 2014 Liverpool Biennial).

Following the recent success of *Metamorphosis of Japan After the War*, which closed on 26 April 2015 and welcomed over 16,000 visitors, the Gallery is currently installing the next exhibition: *Open 1*. This is the first in a series of three annual exhibitions, which offer a platform to showcase new work submitted via the Gallery's Exhibition Submissions portal ([www.openeye.org.uk/get-involved/exhibition-submissions](http://www.openeye.org.uk/get-involved/exhibition-submissions)).

## EDITORS NOTES

### CONTACT US:

If you need to contact us to ask a question, arrange interviews or to request hires image files, please email Charlotte Anne Down, Marketing and Communications Officer:

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### GALLERY OPENING HOURS:

10.30am - 5.30pm

Tuesday to Sunday during exhibitions.

Closed on Mondays (except bank holidays) and during exhibition changeovers.

### ABOUT OPEN EYE GALLERY:

Founded in 1977 Open Eye Gallery is an independent not-for-profit photography gallery based in Liverpool. One of the UK's leading photography spaces, Open Eye Gallery is the only gallery dedicated to photography and related media in the North West of England. Open Eye Gallery has consistently championed photography as an art form that is relevant to everyone. It promotes the practice, enjoyment and understanding of photography by creating challenging and entertaining opportunities to experience and appreciate distinctive, innovative photographs.

As well as presenting a programme of international, high-quality exhibitions Open Eye Gallery houses a permanent Archive containing photographs dating from the 1930s to the present day.

In November 2011 Open Eye Gallery re-launched in a brand new purpose-built home in one of the city's most prestigious and prominent new developments on the Liverpool Waterfront. The gallery opens on to a large covered public square and is split over two floors. Open Eye Gallery hosts an international programme of cutting edge exhibitions showcased all year round, including periodic exhibitions reflecting on the gallery's Archive. Open Eye Gallery also commissions Wall Works - large-scale graphic art installations for the external facade of the gallery. The gallery's position at the heart of the regenerated Waterfront - next to the Museum of Liverpool and a stone's throw from Tate Liverpool and Albert Dock - cements its commitment to the city and its vibrant cultural life.

*Ends -*



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